

WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,
and workers in the District of Columbia*

Friday, November 5, 2004

SERIES OF FREE CHILD SAFETY SEAT INSPECTIONS TO BE HELD IN LOCATIONS ACROSS DC

As part of their ongoing efforts to educate parents, and promote the proper installation and use of child safety seats, the MPDC and the District Department of Transportation have teamed up to hold a series of free child safety seat inspections in DC leading up to the Christmas holiday. Beginning on November 6, and continuing every Saturday through December 18, parents can have their child safety seats inspected and properly fitted, and receive information on how to obtain low-cost safety seats, if needed. The inspections will be offered between 10 am and 3 pm at a designated location each Saturday. DC traffic safety officials point out that too many parents still don't know about, and use, the full range of child safety seats, especially booster seats. Safety experts strongly recommend that children should not be moved into regular seat belts until they are at least four-feet, nine-inches tall, weigh about 80 pounds and are approximately 8 years old. And DC law now requires that children up to age 8 be secured in age-appropriate safety seats, including booster seats for older children in the age range.

① For the complete news release on the child safety seat inspections, including the locations for each event, go to:

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2950>

① The child safety seat inspections come on the heels of a recent tragedy in which a 3-year-old boy was killed, and his 18-month-old brother seriously injured, in a traffic crash on I-295. Neither child was apparently secured in a safety seat. Details on the incident at:

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2943>.

① Detailed information about child safety seat laws and resources in DC can be found on the traffic safety page of the MPD website:

<http://www.mpdc.dc.gov/info/family/childseat.shtm>

COLDER WEATHER IS COMING; DON'T MAKE YOUR VEHICLE AN EASY TARGET

It happens almost every fall and winter in DC: an up-tick in auto thefts that are the result of motorists leaving their vehicles running while unattended. In 2003, more than 9,500 vehicles were reported stolen in DC, an increase of 4 percent from the previous year and the third consecutive year in which auto thefts increased in the city. (Fortunately, the trend appears to be reversing; through the first 10 months of 2004, auto thefts were down 9 percent citywide, according to preliminary statistics.) While it is impossible to tell how many auto thefts are the result of running vehicles left unattended, national statistics do show that more than 20 percent of vehicles stolen had the key left in the ignition. As colder weather arrives, some drivers will be tempted to run their vehicle to warm it up, while they remain indoors. Other motorists tend to leave their vehicles running while they dash into a convenience store or other location – the rationale being that they will be away from their cars for only a “brief” minute or two. In either instance, the practice is unwise, unsafe and illegal. Some auto thieves need as little as a minute to break into and steal a vehicle that is locked and without a key. The time needed to steal a car that is unlocked, unattended and running is literally a matter of seconds. And under DC law, motorists who leave a motor vehicle running and unattended can receive a \$50 Notice of Infraction and the vehicle may be impounded. This cold-weather season, the MPDC asks all motorists to take appropriate measures to avoid being the victim of auto theft and to never leave their vehicles running unattended.

① For other auto theft prevention tips, go to:

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/autotheft.shtm>

① As a further protection against auto theft, the MPDC encourages all DC vehicle owners to participate in the free “Watch Your Car” program. Details, including online registration, are available at:

NEW PARTNERSHIP TAKING HOLD TO CREATE SAFER NEIGHBORHOODS IN 1D AND 5D

A new partnership of clergy members, police officials and community leaders is coming together to combat crime and improve safety in the neighborhoods of the First and Fifth Police Districts, which make up Regional Operations Command-Central. The ROC-Central Clergy-Police-Community Partnership (CPCP) is modeled after the highly successful East of the River CPCP that has been operating in Districts 6 and 7 for the past few years. Like its counterpart east of the river, the ROC-Central CPCP will be focusing much of its energy and resources on young people. In fact, the group's mission statement is to "foster a partnership between clergy, law enforcement, community, businesses, educational institutions and government agencies to provide preventive and interactive ministries for youth in an at-risk environment." On Sunday, November 7, ROC-Central is installing its board members and officers in a ceremony at Mt. Airy Baptist Church. The chairman of the board is the Rev. Larry B. West, pastor at Mt. Airy; the CPCP's executive director is the Rev. Raymond C. Bell, pastor of First Rising Mt. Zion Baptist. Partners in the endeavor include nine churches in 1D and 5D, the MPDC (led by ROC-Central Assistant Chief Brian Jordan), the US Attorney's Office, Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency, and various community organizations and initiatives.

CRIME IN DC FALLS AGAIN IN OCTOBER

DC experienced a double-digit decline in serious crime once again during October, according to preliminary statistics from the MPDC. Comparing October numbers for both 2003 and 2004, the Department reported reductions in all nine major crime categories. These ranged from a 4 percent drop in robberies to a 42 percent reduction in sexual assaults and a 57 percent decline in arson offenses (from 7 to 3). Homicides were down 24 percent for the month, from 21 in October 2003 to 16 last month. Overall violent crime and overall property crime each declined by 11 percent last month. As in recent months, the preliminary statistics for October show crime reductions in all seven police districts. The Sixth District led the trend, with a 28 percent drop in serious offenses. Through the first 10 months of 2004, overall crime in DC is down by 12 percent, according to preliminary data. Compared with totals for the first 10 months of 2003, this year's preliminary figures show continued reductions in all nine major crime categories and in all seven police districts. Year-to-date, there have been substantial reductions in homicides (-20%), sexual assaults (-31%), thefts from auto (-20%) and arson offenses (-33%).

NEWS & NOTES

Veterans' Day Schedule. In observance of Veterans' Day, most administrative offices of the MPDC will be closed on Thursday, November 11. Police patrols and other essential operations will be fully staffed. Administrative offices will reopen on Friday, November 12, 2004.

Annual Awards Ceremony. The MPDC's Fifth Annual Awards Ceremony will take place on Tuesday, December 14, 2004, from 6-9 pm, in DAR Constitution Hall in Northwest DC. Outstanding sworn and civilian employees, along with community partners, will be recognized for their crime prevention efforts over the past year. Members of the public are invited to attend. For details, call Alton White at (202) 727-4770.

Review, Pay Photo Enforcement Tickets Online. Motorists who receive automated enforcement tickets for speeding aggressively or running a red light in DC can now review the violation photographs online via a password-protected website. And if they choose to pay the ticket, motorists can now do so over a secure website as well. The new automated features, which are free of charge, do not replace current adjudication procedures, but are designed for the convenience of motorists. Get more details at <http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2931>.

① To contact the ROC-Central CPCP, call (202) 289-4889 or email: pastor@firstrising.org

① Learn more about the East of the River CPCP by going to: <http://www.charityadvantage.com/ercpcp/Home.asp>

① View preliminary crime statistics for each of the seven police districts and DC as a whole by going to: http://www.mpdc.dc.gov/info/districts/crstats_readthis.shtml

① The FBI recently released its official, nationwide crime statistics for 2003, showing a 3 percent reduction in violent crime last year when compared with 2002. Details at: <http://www.fbi.gov/pressrel/pressrel04/crimestat102504.htm>

DATA BOX

Homicides as of 11/5/04

- ◆ 2004: 170
- ◆ 2003: 210
- ◆ % Change: -19.0%
- ◆ Closure Rate: 54.1% (92 closures)

Adult Arrests week end. 10/30/04

- ◆ Total: 874
- ◆ Drugs: 154
- ◆ Weapons: 26
- ◆ Motor Vehicle Theft: 15
- ◆ Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 43

Juvenile Activity week end. 10/30/04

- ◆ Arrests: 51
- ◆ Curfew Violations: 38
- ◆ Truants: 129

Firearm Recoveries as of 11/3/04

- ◆ November: 16
- ◆ October: 154
- ◆ 2004 Total: 1,695

Traffic Fatalities as of 11/5/04

- ◆ 2004: 40
- ◆ 2003: 57
- ◆ % Change: -29.8%

Information, ideas, or comments about this service? Send an e-mail to **KEVIN MORISON**, MPDC's Director of Corporate Communications, at kevin.morison@dc.gov. Would you like to have this information e-mailed to you? Just go to our Website and register with **Crimereports.com**.

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